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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/687,718	10/17/2003	Susan B. Cirulli	END920030061US1 (16846)	3283
23389 7590 03/07/2007 SCULLY SCOTT MURPHY & PRESSER, PC 400 GARDEN CITY PLAZA SUITE 300 GARDEN CITY, NY 11530			EXAMINER ALLEN, WILLIAM J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3625	
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		03/07/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/687,718	Applicant(s) CIRULLI ET AL.	
	Examiner William J. Allen	Art Unit 3625	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 December 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 October 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Prosecution History Summary

Claims 1-20 are pending.

Claim 19, previously withdrawn by the Examiner, is hereby rejoined.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 12/28/2006 has been entered.

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's arguments in response to the election/restriction of claim 19 in the previous Office Action is persuasive. Claim 19 is hereby rejoined and examined below.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 12/28/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant contests that Lemble in view of Altman fails to teach the newly amended feature updating the list of approvers "to account for delegation of approval authority by said approvers to other persons". The Examiner disagrees, and notes that Lemble teaches this aspect. In Lemble, an authorized user may change the approver list and delegate authority to other users. Lemble even goes so far as to include the delegation of authority from a user to another user in the event that one user is absent, such as in the instance that a user is on vacation. Thereby, Lemble in view of Altman teaches the noted aspect of "accounting for delegation of approval authority by said approvers to other persons" (see at least: col. 8 lines 44-61 (also not "Function Table"), col. 24 lines 36-50, col. 25 lines 35-39, col. 26 lines 3-33, Fig. 13, 15, and 16).

Additionally, despite the teachings in Lemble, the Examiner notes that the phrase "to account for delegation..." does not necessarily move to distinguish the claimed invention. Though the newly added recitation provide a reason or rationale for recalculating the approver list, it falls short of further limiting the claim. Simply providing details as to why certain steps are being performed does not relate back to the claim and fails to impact the actual steps being performed. In other words, because the recitation is directed to the intent or purpose and does not relate back to the method step in such a way as to affect the recalculation step itself, the clause carries little patentable weight.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lemble (US 5315504) in view of Altman (US 6721921).

Regarding claim 1, Lemble teaches:

preparing an electronic requisition form including a proposal for a requisition, wherein said proposal requires approval by each of a plurality of approvers (see at least: abstract, col. 1 lines 41-48, col. 15 line 58 – col. 16 line 23);

establishing an electronic list of the approvers for the proposal for requisition (see at least: abstract, Fig. 4, and 10-11, col. 2 lines 35-39, col. 7 lines 44-62 and “Function Table”, col. 11 lines 58-60, col. 17 lines 42-65); and

at defined times, electronically recalculating the list to account for delegation of approval authority by said approvers to other persons (see at least: : col. 8 lines 44-61, col. 18 line 65-col. 19 line 35, col. 22 lines 1-16, col. 24 lines 36-50, col. 25 lines 35-39, col. 26 lines 3-33, Fig. 13, 15, and 16).

The Examiner notes that Lemble teaches changing the displayed name of the user according to the most recent approver to have acted on the requisition (i.e. displaying the previous approver who last acted on the requisition). Furthermore, Lemble teaches displaying the approver list with

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the decisions of approvers who have already acted on the requisition. Lemble, however, does not expressly teach at a defined time, recalculating the list *to change the names of the approvers on the list*. Altman teaches tracking annotations and changes to a document, who has reviewed a document, if every required reviewer has reviewed the document, etc. (see at least: abstract).

Altman additionally teaches the user notifying the system that he/she has acted upon and finished reviewing a specified document (i.e. at a defined time). Upon receipt of such a notification, the system records that the review is complete and removes the reviewer from the list of people to get reminders. In one embodiment, the submission of a review also triggers a message to the document "owner" or coordinator to notify the owner that one fewer review is outstanding (see at least: abstract, col. 8 lines 6-18). Thereby, Altman recalculates the list *to change the names of approvers on the list*. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to have modified the invention of Lemble to have included recalculating the list *to change the names of approvers on the list* as taught by Altman in order to provide an easy means to track annotations and changes to a document, who has reviewed a document, if every required reviewer has reviewed the document, etc. and further provide notification that one fewer review is outstanding to an owner/originator (see at least: Altman, abstract, col. 8 lines 6-18).

Regarding claim 2, Lemble in view of Altman teaches

(2) *wherein the step of recalculating the list includes the step of recalculating the list after each of at least some of the approvers act on the proposal for the requisition* (see at least: Altman, abstract, col. 8 lines 6-18).

(3) *wherein the step of recalculating the list includes the step of recalculating the list according to a given set rules* (see at least: Altman, abstract, col. 8 lines 6-18). The Examiner notes that if a notification is received that a review is complete, a reviewer is removed from the list. This constitutes a rule governing when/how the lists are recalculated.

(4) Lemble in view of Altman teaches *wherein each of the approvers is associated with a computer station*, and further comprising the steps of: after preparing the electronic requisition form, electronically sending the form to an application server and *the application server immediately sending the form to the computer station associated with one of the approvers* (see at least: Lemble, abstract, col. 2 lines 11-18, col. 17 lines 42-52).

Regarding claim 6, Lemble in view of Altman teaches *for each of at least some of the approvers, giving the approver an associated length of time to act on the proposal for the requisition and after the associated length of time electronically sending to the computer station associated with the approver a reminder notice to act on the proposal for requisition* (see at least: Altman, Fig. 14A-14B, col. 7 lines 48-62).

Regarding claims 7-10, 12-16, and 18, these claims closely parallel claims 1-4, and 6. Claims 7-10, 12-16, and 18 are rejected under the same rationale for at least the above reasons.

3. Claims 5, 11, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lemble in view of Altman as applied to claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16, and 18 above, and further in view of Centner et al. (US 2002/0007324, herein referred to as Centner).

Regarding claims 5, 11, and 17, Lemble in view of Altman teaches all of the above as noted and further teaches *wherein each of the approvers is associated with a computer station*, and further comprising the steps of: after preparing the electronic requisition form, electronically sending the form to an application server and *the application server immediately sending the form to the computer station associated with one of the approvers* (see at least: Lemble, abstract, col. 2 lines 11-18, col. 17 lines 42-52). Lemble in view of Altman, however, does not expressly teach *after receiving the form, the application server immediately sending notices to the computer stations associated with the at least some of the approvers, said notices indicating that the form is available at the server*. Centner teaches *after receiving the form, the application server immediately sending notices to the computer stations associated with the at least some of the approvers, said notices indicating that the form is available at the server* (see at least: 0016, claim 1). The Examiner notes that the suppliers are notified of an RFQ/proposal for requisition to bid on (i.e. approve) automatically. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to have modified the invention of Lemble in view of Altman to have included *after receiving the form, the application server immediately sending notices to the computer stations associated with the at least some of the approvers, said notices indicating that the form is available at the server* as taught by Centner in order to automatically notify approvers of a proposal for requisition, thereby facilitating prompt responses (see at least: Centner, 0016, claim 1).

4. Claims 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lemble in view of Altman as applied to claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16, and 18 above, and further in view of Edd et al. (US 20020184255).

Regarding claim 19, Lemble in view of Altman teach all of the above as noted and further teaches:

said proposal requires approval by each of the plurality of approvers in sequence (see at least: Lemble, abstract, col. 5 lines 21-25, Fig. 4), *the proposal including prices and costs* (see at least: Lemble, col. 15 “General Expenses” table, col. 16 lines 18-19,). Lemble in view of Altman, however, does not expressly teach *when one of the approvers approves the proposal, the act of said one of the approvers approving the proposal causes notification of the proposal to be sent to another of the approvers where a first approver is in a first country having a first currency, and a second approver is in a second country having a second currency, presenting the prices to the first approver in the first currency, sending the proposal from the first approver to the second approver, including the step of automatically converting said prices and costs to the second currency, and presenting the process and costs to the second approver in the second currency*. In the same field of endeavor, Edd teaches a system and method for submitting electronic content for approval. Edd further teaches the incorporation of international processing for content that is deemed to be international content. A local translation process conforms content to a format that is appropriate for the specific country , such conformance including currency. The content is then forward label to the specific country for review abroad.

Furthermore, once approved in the main country, an international flag is set and an email is sent

to a designated country "owner" for approval by the foreign country (see at least: abstract, 0122, 0150-0158, Fig. 4A(#120), 4B(#172 & 174), 4C(section 230 activity log), and 14). Thereby, Edd teaches *when one of the approvers approves the proposal, the act of said one of the approvers approving the proposal causes notification of the proposal to be sent to another of the approvers where a first approver is in a first country having a first currency, and a second approver is in a second country having a second currency, presenting the prices to the first approver in the first currency, sending the proposal from the first approver to the second approver, including the step of automatically converting said prices and costs to the second currency, and presenting the process and costs to the second approver in the second currency.* It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to have modified the invention of Lemble in view of Altman to have included the noted aspects taught by Edd in order to provide a system with improved content approval abilities which incorporates an international process for content that is country-specific (see at least: Edd, abstract, 0150).

5. Claims 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lemble in view of Altman as applied to claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16, and 18 above, and further in view of Official Notice.

Regarding claim 20, Lemble in view of Altman teaches all of the above as noted and further teaches *one of the approvers delegating approval authority at a first time to a delegate and changing the name of the approver on said list from said one of the approvers to said delegate*

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(see at least: Lemble, col. 24 lines 36-50, col. 25 lines 35-39, col. 26 lines 3-33, Fig. 13, 15, and 16; Altman, abstract, col. 8 lines 6-18). The Examiner additionally notes that temporary delegation may be required for persons absent for vacation or other reasons (Lemble). Lemble in view of Altman, however, does not explicitly teach *one of the approvers resuming approval authority at a later time and pulling the name of one of the approvers back onto the list at said later time*. The Examiner takes official notice to *one of the approvers resuming approval authority at a later time and pulling the name of one of the approvers back onto the list at said later time* and further notes that Lemble in view of Altman teaches temporary delegation of authority and the adjustment of the approver list for persons absent on vacation. It would have been obvious to have included such aspects in accordance with Lemble in view of Altman because it is apparent to one of ordinary skill that an approver on vacation returns from that vacation at some point (i.e. a *later time*) and assumes their regular duties. Thereby, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have included *one of the approvers resuming approval authority at a later time and pulling the name of one of the approvers back onto the list at said later time* as taught by Official Notice in order to allow a returning user who has delegated temporary authority to another user to resume their usual responsibilities in the workplace and have their presence accurately reflected in the listing of approvers.

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Conclusion


6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. US 7117165 discloses an operating resource management system that facilitates use of multiple currency.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William J. Allen whose telephone number is (571) 272-1443. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeff A. Smith can be reached on (571) 272-6763. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

William J. Allen
Patent Examiner
February 27, 2007


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